

2011 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2015

Project Title: MeCC VI - Restoring Our Lands and Waters (2.3)

Project Manager: Wiley Buck
Affiliation: Great River Greening
Address: 35 W Water St, Ste 201
City / State / Zip: St Paul, MN 55107
Telephone Number: (651) 665-9500
Email Address: wbuck@greatrivergreening.org
Web Address: <http://www.greatrivergreening.org>

FUNDING SOURCE: Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

LEGAL CITATION: M.L. 2011, First Special Session, Chp. 2, Art.3, Sec. 2, Subd. 04i2.3; M.L. 2014, Chapter 226, Section 2, Subdivision 19

APPROPRIATION AMOUNT: \$400,000

Overall Project Outcomes and Results

Along with partners and volunteers, Greening undertook restoration projects to reduce habitat fragmentation, enhance habitat quality, reconnect habitat corridors, and build connections with local communities. Significantly exceeding all of our goals, we:

- 1) restored/enhanced 191 acres of upland habitat and an additional 192 acres with leveraged non-state funds for a total of 383 acres restored,
- 2) restored/enhanced 0.26 mile of shoreland habitat and an additional 0.20 mile using leveraged non-state funds for a total of 0.46 miles of restored shoreland,
- 3) engaged nearly 2,500 volunteers in meaningful parts of these projects, including 700 youth.

Habitats included prairie, oak savanna, woodland, wetland, riparian, and black ash swamp. Sites hosted a total of 14 documented rare species (7 vertebrates, 1 invertebrate, and 6 plant species) (Battle Creek Park, Hidden Valley Park, Katherine Abbott Park, Lake St. Croix Beach, Pilot Knob Hill, Spring Lake Park (Scott Co.), one easement property), and four native plant communities with biodiversity of statewide significance as rated by Minnesota County Biological Survey (Hidden Valley Park, Ike's Creek, Spring Lake Park (Scott Co.), Pond Dakota Mission).

We restored 18 sites using methods such as native species plantings, prescribed burns, and mechanical removal and treatment of invasive species. We restored and de-fragmented habitat along the valleys and banks of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers (Heritage Village Park, Battle Creek Park, Pilot Knob Hill, Pond Dakota Mission, Ike's Creek, Valley Park) as well as our Wild and Scenic Rivers (Cedar Creek Conservation Area, Martin's Meadows, five easement properties), and restored prairie/savanna at a site historically connected to Lost Valley Prairie SNA (Central Corridor). We also restored habitat at several ecological cores (Spring Lake Park (Scott Co.), Cedar Lake Farm, Katherine Abbott Park, Freeman Park).

Volunteers planted over 2,400 trees/shrubs and 27,000 forb/grass plugs, and received presentations from a Greening ecologist as part of their workday.

We leveraged a total of \$441,000 non-state funds for these projects.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

Volunteer event descriptions acknowledging Trust Fund contributions and qualitative results were emailed to Greening's e-subscribers in July 2011, Feb 2012, July 2012, February 2013, July 2013, and spring 2014 in advance of our spring and fall volunteer event seasons. Over the course of the grants, the number of subscribers increased from about 5,000 to over 6,000.

Information about the Metro Conservation Corridors is on our website in the Initiatives and Volunteer Events sections at <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/> . Over the course of the grant, the visits to the Greening website increased from approximately 1,200 to approximately 1,500 visits per month.

A summary of results from our partnership with Metro Conservation Corridors was included in email marketing in January 2012, as part of our 2011 annual report, reaching over 5,000 subscribers. Approximately 300 hard copies of the annual report were also distributed.

Two press articles, complete with correct ENRTF acknowledgement, were released during the grant period.

- The Mendota Heights Patch reported in April 2012 on continued restoration at Pilot Knob Historic Site: <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/4.23.12-Restoration-Continues-at-Pilot-Knob-Historic-Site-Mendota-Heights-MN-Patch.pdf> .
- The Isanti County News reported on a fall 2012 Greening volunteer event in the Wild and Scenic Rum River project area: <http://isanticountynews.com/2012/10/31/restoration-effort-preserves-20-acres-of-floodplain-forest-along-rum-river/>.

An additional five press articles, missing correct acknowledgement despite our efforts, disseminated information about the projects.

- The Bloomington Crow reported in April 2012 on a volunteer event focused on removing invasive species at Ike's Creek: <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/4.27.12-Chamber-Community-Outreach-Committee-Pulls-Buckthorn-at-Ike-Bloomington-Crow.pdf>.
- The Pioneer Press reported on May 3, 2012 on an upcoming volunteer event to remove invasive species and planting prairie seeds at Pilot Knob Hill: <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/5.3.12-Volunteers-at-Pilot-Knob-Mendota-Heights-Pioneer-Press.pdf>.
- The Mendota Heights Patch reported on May 8, 2012 on the same volunteer at Pilot Knob Hill, discussing the work to restore a prairie with a high biodiversity of native plant species: <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/5.8.12-Pilot-Knob-Clean-up-Draws-Volunteers-Public-Officials-Mendota-Heights-MN-Patch.pdf>.
- The Sun Current reported in June 2012 on a volunteer event and the history of restoration at Ike's Creek: <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/6.27.12-Bringing-new-life-to-a-Bloomington-Creek-Sun-Current.pdf>.
- The Path, a newsletter published by DNR Division of Parks and Trails for its employees, reported in November 2012 on a volunteer event at a DNR Wild and Scenic River easement along the Rum River. See page 4: <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/12.11.12-DNR-Parks-and-Trails-Internal-Newsletter.pdf>.

Greening is in active partnership with landowners, other land managers, service providers, conservation peers, and volunteers resulting in a dynamic and timely exchange of information and results.



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) M.L. 2011 Work Plan Final Report

Date of Status Update: 8/17/2015
Final Report: 8/17/2015
Date of Work Plan Approval: 6/23/2011
Project Completion Date: 6/30/2015

Project Title: MeCC VI - Restoring Our Lands and Waters (2.3)

Project Manager: Wiley Buck
Affiliation: Great River Greening
Address: 35 W Water St, Ste 201
City: St Paul **State:** MN **Zipcode:** 55107

Telephone Number: (651) 665-9500
Email Address: wbuck@greatrivergreening.org
Web Address: <http://www.greatrivergreening.org>

Location:

Counties Impacted: Anoka, Chisago, Dakota, Goodhue, Hennepin, Isanti, Ramsey, Scott, Washington

Ecological Section Impacted: Minnesota and Northeast Iowa Morainal (222M), Paleozoic Plateau (222L), Western Superior Uplands (212K)

Total ENRTF Project Budget:	ENRTF Appropriation \$:	400,000
	Amount Spent \$:	398,479
	Balance \$:	1,523

Legal Citation: M.L. 2011, First Special Session, Chp. 2, Art.3, Sec. 2, Subd. 04i2.3; M.L. 2014, Chapter 226, Section 2, Subdivision 19

Appropriation Language:

Carryforward: The availability of the appropriations for the following projects are extended to June 30, 2015: (3) Laws 2011, First Special Session chapter 2, article 3, section 2, subdivision 4, paragraph (i), Metropolitan Conservation Corridors (MeCC) - Phase VI;

\$1,737,000 the first year and \$1,738,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for the acceleration of agency programs and cooperative agreements. Of this appropriation, \$150,000 the first year and \$150,000 the second year are to the commissioner of natural resources for agency programs and \$3,175,000 is for the agreements as follows: \$100,000 the first year and \$100,000 the second year with Friends of the Mississippi River; \$517,000 the first year and \$518,000 the second year with Dakota County; \$200,000 the first year and \$200,000 the second year with Great River Greening; \$220,000 the first year and \$220,000 the second year with Minnesota Land Trust; \$300,000 the first year and \$300,000 the second year with Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc.; and \$250,000 the first year and \$250,000 the second year with The Trust for Public Land for planning, restoring, and protecting priority natural areas in the metropolitan area, as defined under Minnesota Statutes, section 473.121, subdivision 2, and portions of the surrounding counties, through contracted services, technical assistance, conservation easements, and fee title acquisition. Land acquired with this appropriation must be sufficiently improved to meet at least minimum management standards, as determined by the commissioner of natural resources. Expenditures are limited to the identified project corridor areas as defined in the work program. This appropriation may not be used for the purchase of habitable residential structures, unless expressly approved in the work program. All conservation easements must be perpetual and have a natural resource management plan. Any land acquired in fee title by the commissioner of natural resources with money from this appropriation must be designated as an outdoor recreation unit under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.07. The commissioner may similarly designate any lands acquired in less than fee title. A list of proposed restorations and fee title and easement acquisitions must be provided as part of the required work program. An entity that acquires a conservation easement with appropriations from the trust fund must

MeCC VI - Restoring Our Lands and Waters (2.3)

have a long-term stewardship plan for the easement and a fund established for monitoring and enforcing the agreement. Money appropriated from the trust fund for easement acquisition may be used to establish a monitoring, management, and enforcement fund as approved in the work program. An annual financial report is required for any monitoring, management, and enforcement fund established, including expenditures from the fund. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

I. PROJECT TITLE: MeCC VI - 2.3: Restoring Our Lands and Waters

II. PROJECT SUMMARY:

Much of the remaining natural habitat within the Greater Twin Cities metropolitan area is threatened by conversion, fragmentation, invasive species, development, altered hydrology, and climate change. Restoration and management of these habitats is needed to save Minnesota's natural heritage for future generations, protect rare and declining species, protect our clean water, reconnect habitat corridors, and serve as an avenue to connect residents with their local environment. In the end, long-term support for natural areas and their ongoing protection and management among community members will be the only way to safeguard these treasures through time. Great River Greening's efforts to build that connection through community volunteer events will play a key role in building that link.

Great River Greening will work with an array of local, state, and federal government agencies, non-profit organizations and individuals – as part of the Metro Conservation Corridors Partnership – to undertake a diverse array of restoration projects that serve to meet **our project goals** of: 1) reducing habitat fragmentation, 2) enhancing habitat quality, 3) reconnecting habitat corridors, and 4) building connections with local communities. **Our objectives** through this grant are to: 1) restore 121 acres of upland habitat, plus an additional 146 acres using leveraged non-state funds, 2) restore 0.18 mile of shoreland habitat, plus an additional 0.14 mile using leveraged non-state funds, and 3) engage 450 volunteers. We have identified 11 important restoration projects – based on criteria of ecological significance, partner commitment, opportunity, and community importance – that are poised for action during the grant timeline. These specific projects, listed in the Restoration List, are exemplary of our continued engagement in the Anoka Sandplain, St. Croix Healthy Waters Campaign, collar counties, urban core, and State Wild & Scenic Rivers within the mapped Metro Corridors.

For each site, an ecological restoration and management plan will be made that is consistent with the highest quality conservation and ecological goals for the restoration site. The plan will give consideration to factors such as soil, topography, geology, and other relevant factors that would provide for the best chance for long-term success of the restoration. The plan will include a timetable for implementing the restoration, identify long-term maintenance and management needs of the restoration and how they will be financed, take advantage of the best available science, and include innovative techniques to achieve the best restoration.

For each project, an initial restoration evaluation will be provided at the completion of the appropriation, and another evaluation three years after the completion of the expenditure. Restorations will be evaluated relative to the state goals and standards in the restoration plan, current science, and, when applicable, the Board of Water and Soil Resources native vegetation establishment and enhancement guidelines. The evaluation shall determine whether the restoration is meeting planned goals, identify any problems with the implementation of the restoration, and, if necessary, give recommendations on improving restorations.

Private lands will be required to have a permanent conservation/scenic easement in effect. Species lists will be based on DNR, DNR/Great River Greening, and USDA Plants Database lists. In instances when leveraged match funds exceed our goal, Greening prefers to reinvest, to a level that is justified, in the original project area to augment, improve, and accelerate the restoration of those acres, before enlarging the project boundary to begin restoration of additional acres.

III. PROJECT STATUS UPDATES:

Project Status as of February 1, 2012:

The majority of projects are on schedule for completion by 6/30/13. Some projects have required a longer planning phase (e.g. Cedar Lake Farm Shoreland Restoration) but are nevertheless projected for implementation by 6/30/13.

The Ike's Creek project is on schedule, including a fall 2011 volunteer event, with additional activities planned. However, there have been delays by the City of Bloomington in the signing the landowner agreement. Based on conversations with City staff, Greening is confident that the Agreement will be signed by early spring 2012; they have signed the same agreement for work at Pond Dakota Mission. Until we receive signature, we are not requesting any Trust Fund reimbursement, nor including the field accomplishments in our total.

One project that is not on schedule is the Battle Creek Bluffs restoration. Due to an unanticipated overhaul of the National Park Service's "Servicewide Comprehensive Call" grant program (N. Duncan, MNRRA, pers. comm.) the federal match is delayed until at least 10/1/12. While the Battle Creek proposal ranked top in the area NPS ranking, this project along with many others did not get funded at the federal level due to the abrupt overhaul.

The delay/absence of federal match will prevent us from reaching our original goals at Battle Creek. Greening is prepared to meet our overall acreage goals through a modified, smaller scale project at Battle Creek using county match, as well as three replacement projects: Spring Lake Regional Park (Scott Co.) Phase III; Freeman Park (Shorewood); and Bridgewater Park (Medina). In addition, we are proposing to add the public site Martin Meadows Park (Andover) to our project list, as it is in the same focus area as our Rum Wild and Scenic River project for protected private lands. With these additions to the project list, the acreage goals are projected to be met.

The loss of the MNRRA match is largely offset by greater than anticipated match for Pilot Knob Hill, match associated with proposed replacement projects, and addition of DNR Shorelands match at two Rum River projects.

Amendment Request (2/1/12)

We request to simplify Attachment A/Personnel by no longer tracking individual salaries and benefits. Benefits change with insurance rates and other factors; and personnel salaries can change and/or we can experience personnel turnover. While remaining transparent through our detailed submissions, including individual's rates and amount, to DNR for payment, we want to put all personnel into a single lump sum on Attachment A. Otherwise, managing individual personnel totals will result in an a large amount of administrative detail and effort, and restrict our flexibility for personnel assignments during field seasons.

Amendment Approved: 02/09/12

Project Status as of August 1, 2012:

The majority of projects are on schedule for completion by 6/30/13. Some projects have required a longer planning phase (e.g. Cedar Lake Farm Shoreland Restoration) but are nevertheless projected for implementation by 6/30/13. Spending will increase significantly with some intensive activity in fall 2012.

In order to reach our overall goals for Wild and Scenic River activities, we propose to undertake a 33.5 acre prairie restoration at Cedar Creek Conservation Area, an Anoka Co. Park on the Rum River. This project was previously included in our MeCC VII project list, but it is ready to move forward this year. Private lands projects in our Wild and Scenic River program, despite their merit, are not developing as quickly as this public land project.

We also propose to undertake the 4.5 acre Central Corridor Phase III prairie restoration project, which was also originally slated for the next phase of MeCC. This will replace the Bridgewater Park project which is not moving forward.

With the above revisions to our project list, we are projecting to complete over 150 acres restored/enhanced by LCCMR, which exceeds our acreage goals, and 0.18 mile of LCCMR restored shoreline, which meets our shoreline goals.

Amendment Request (08/01/2012)

Greening respectfully requests to shift \$17,000 from Result 2 Supplies to Result 2 Contracts. This is in anticipation of a large erosion control contract for the Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park shoreline restoration; RFP is scheduled to go out in August.

Amendment Approved: 08/08/2012

Amendment Request (09/05/2012)

Greening respectfully request to add oak woodland enhancement at Valley Park in Mendota Heights to our project list. Valley Park is located in a tributary valley which connects to the Mississippi River Valley at Lilydale Regional Park. Enhancement work includes garlic mustard and buckthorn control in select portions of the park, releasing a multi-aged oak grove from the buckthorn infestation. The understory is depauperate of native species, and therefore the enhancement work will include seeding and plugging aggressive native understory species once the buckthorn clearing is complete.

No changes to Attachment A are associated with this request.

Amendment Approved: 09/06/2012

Project Status as of February 1, 2013:

Amendment Requests (02/01/2013)

Greening respectfully requests to make a midstream correction to our budget in a number of categories, and between Results, as detailed in Attachment A and as indicated in the strikeout and underline in the budget information below. These adjustments are necessary as the budgets and use of match funds are more fully determined on a project by project basis. In general, we are seeking: more for contracts, mileage, and volunteer events; a reduction in personnel and site prep supplies; and an overall shift of funds to Result 1.

Amendment approved: February 15, 2013.

Greening respectfully request a Work Plan amendment to take full advantage of 2013 fall seeding opportunities, and the 2013 growing season to perform such things as invasive species control and prairie establishment activities on recently seeded prairies. As indicated by the strikeout and underline in the Reporting Requirements section below we are proposing a project completion date of June 30, 2014, while intending to perform the large majority of work by June 30, 2013.

Amendment approved: February 15, 2013.

During the last six months, Greening's projects have advanced significantly. Activities well underway include forest and prairie enhancements on over 100 total acres, prairie seeding of 80 total acres, plug planting of over 1200 feet of shoreline, and utility pole removal completed at Pilot Knob Hill to defragment the savanna. A total of fourteen projects are underway, and several of them have expanded to additional acreage and activities. We are on track to exceed both our acreage and shoreline goals.

Project Status as of August 1, 2013:

One project is completed and remaining thirteen remain underway. Significant progress has been made on all projects in the last six months, ranging from prairie plantings and seedings, wetland restoration, forest enhancements, and invasive species control. A running total of over 150 Trust Fund acres and 0.28 mi of shoreline are Underway or Completed. Volunteers have been engaged in meaningful parts

of the activities including planting 1500 trees and shrubs at Cedar Creek Conservation Area, and over 13,000 forb and grass plugs at Cedar Lake Regional Park, Spring Lake Regional Park, Heritage Village Park, Pond Dakota Mission Park, and Pilot Knob Hill. Over 1,000 volunteers were engaged for over 3,000 hours, both at large Saturday events and a large number of smaller weekday events with corporate, school, and church groups.

Project Status as of February 1, 2014:

Amendment Request (02/01/2014)

Greening respectfully requests to add select acres of Katherine Abbott Phase I to our list of projects. The bulk of Katherine Abbott Phase I is underway with the 2013 appropriation, but adding a portion of the project will allow for an additional six (6) acres to be enhanced, using funds that are available in this appropriation.

Greening also requests a number of budget changes to reflect actual and anticipated expenditures versus earlier estimates. These are:

1. Decreasing the Activity 1 "Personnel" budget by \$1,500 down to \$81,300, and decreasing Activity 2 "Personnel" budget by \$623 down to \$14,570.
2. Decrease "Contracts" budget category for Activity 2 by \$208 down to \$78,627
3. Correspondingly, increase "Supplies – seeds..." budget category for Activity 1 by \$1,000 up to \$65,900
4. Increase "Travel Expense" in Minnesota in Activity 1 by \$500 up to \$7,900 and in Activity 2 by \$831 up to \$2,131

Approved by LCCMR 2-26-14

We have a running total of 195 acres and 0.27 miles of shoreline restored/ enhanced, well on our way to exceed our goal of 121 acres and 0.18 mile of shoreline. With leveraged funds, we have an additional 158 acres and 0.22 miles of shoreline underway or complete, well on the way to exceed our goal of 146 acres and 0.14 mile of shoreline.

To date, over 2,400 volunteers have been engaged in meaningful parts of these projects, of which over 700 were youth, both at large Saturday events and a large number of smaller weekday events with corporate, civic, school, and church groups. Volunteers have planted over 2,400 trees and shrubs, and over 27,000 forb and grass plugs as well as receiving a roving presentation on the activity, the site, and other relevant topics of interest.

Amendment Request (06/27/2014)

Greening requests an extension of the Project Completion Date from June 30, 2014 to December 1, 2014 in order to allow for supplemental seeding, plugging and invasive species control through the full season and seed harvest season for natural community integrity and in particular pollinator habitat.

Amendment Approved: 07/02/14

Project Status as of August 1, 2014:

We have a running total of 173 acres and 0.27 miles of shoreline restored/ enhanced, well on our way to exceed our goal of 121 acres and 0.18 mile of shoreline. With leveraged funds, we have an additional 155 acres and 0.19 miles of shoreline underway or complete, well on our way to exceed our goal of 146 acres and 0.14 mile of shoreline.

To date, over 2,400 volunteers have been engaged in meaningful parts of these projects, of which over 700 were youth, both at large Saturday events and a large number of smaller weekday events with corporate, civic, school, and church groups. Volunteers have planted over 2,400 trees and shrubs, and over 27,000 forb and grass plugs as well as receiving a roving presentation on the activity, the site, and other relevant topics of interest.

Amendment Request (08/01/2014)

Greening respectfully requests a number of budget changes to complete supplemental seeding/plugging and invasive species activities through December 1st, for habitat improvement at select project sites, and completion of 2011 restoration initial evaluations. We anticipate that labor, contracts, herbicide, and volunteer event supplies will come in under budget, and are seeking to shift more dollars to seeds and plugs, and travel.

Amendment Approved: 08/11/14

Amendment Request (11/21/14)

Greening respectfully requests an extension of the Project Completion Date from December 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015. The 2014 fall season came to an abrupt end due to early snow and cold temperatures, and we are now looking for improved conditions this winter and spring to complete our field activities.

Amendment Approved: 12/2/14

Project Status as of February 1, 2015:

Upon updating numbers and polygons, we now anticipate a total of 175 acres and 0.27 miles of shoreline restored/ enhanced, well on our way to exceed our goal of 121 acres and 0.18 mile of shoreline. With leveraged funds, anticipate an additional 159 acres and 0.19 miles of shoreline restored, well on our way to exceed our goal of 146 acres and 0.14 mile of shoreline.

Over 2,400 volunteers were engaged in meaningful parts of these projects, of which over 700 were youth, both at large Saturday events and a large number of smaller weekday events with corporate, civic, school, and church groups. Volunteers planted over 2,400 trees and shrubs, and over 27,000 forb and grass plugs, and received a roving presentation on the activity, the site, and other relevant topics of interest.

Final Project Status, August 17, 2015:

Along with partners and volunteers, Greening undertook restoration projects to reduce habitat fragmentation, enhance habitat quality, reconnect habitat corridors, and build connections with local communities. Significantly exceeding all of our goals, we:

- 1) restored/enhanced 191 acres of upland habitat and an additional 192 acres with leveraged non-state funds for a total of 383 acres restored,
- 2) restored/enhanced 0.26 mile of shoreline habitat and an additional 0.20 mile using leveraged non-state funds for a total of 0.46 miles of restored shoreline,
- 3) engaged nearly 2,500 volunteers in meaningful parts of these projects, including 700 youth.

Habitats included prairie, oak savanna, woodland, wetland, riparian, and black ash swamp. Sites hosted a total of 14 documented rare species (7 vertebrates, 1 invertebrate, and 6 plant species) (Battle Creek Park, Hidden Valley Park, Katherine Abbott Park, Lake St. Croix Beach, Pilot Knob Hill, Spring Lake Park (Scott Co.), one easement property), and four native plant communities with biodiversity of statewide significance as rated by Minnesota County Biological Survey (Hidden Valley Park, Ike's Creek, Spring Lake Park (Scott Co.), Pond Dakota Mission).

We restored 18 sites using methods such as native species plantings, prescribed burns, and mechanical removal and treatment of invasive species. We restored and de-fragmented habitat along the valleys and banks of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers (Heritage Village Park, Battle Creek Park, Pilot Knob Hill, Pond Dakota Mission, Ike's Creek, Valley Park) as well as our Wild and Scenic Rivers (Cedar Creek Conservation Area, Martin's Meadows, five easement properties), and restored prairie/savanna at a site historically connected to Lost Valley Prairie SNA (Central Corridor). We also

restored habitat at several ecological cores (Spring Lake Park (Scott Co.), Cedar Lake Farm, Katherine Abbott Park, Freeman Park).

Volunteers planted over 2,400 trees/shrubs and 27,000 forb/grass plugs, and received presentations from a Greening ecologist as part of their workday.

We leveraged a total of \$441,000 non-state funds for these projects.

IV. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES:

ACTIVITY 1: Restoration and Enhancement of Upland Habitats

Description: We will restore 121 acres, plus an additional 146 acres using leveraged non-state funds (267 total acres) of upland habitat (forests, woodlands, savanna and prairie) through control of invasive species, seeding/planting, prescribed fire, establishment mowing, direct hardwood seeding, and associated activities.

Summary Budget Information for Activity 1:

ENRTF Budget: \$ 275,000
Amount Spent: \$ 273,546
Balance: \$ 1,454

Activity Completion Date:

Outcome	Completion Date	Budget
1. Restore 121 acres of upland habitat (forests, woodlands, savanna and prairie) through control of invasive species, seeding/planting, prescribed fire, establishment mowing, direct hardwood seeding, and associated activities. Anticipated milestones include 65 ac Underway by 12/31/11; 121 ac Underway by 6/1/12; 121 ac >30% complete by 12/31/12.	6/30/15	\$ 275,000

Activity Status as of February 1, 2012:

Over 50 acres of habitat restoration, enhancement, and maintenance are underway. This is below our goal of 65 ac at this time, largely due to the delays with the Battle Creek Bluffs restoration project, but our final goals remain well within reach.

Central Corridor Phase II (13 Trust Fund acres, 26 total acres) is well underway with woody invasives removal including a 100-person volunteer event in fall 2011, and seeding of a fallow farm field.

The proposed modified Battle Creek project is aimed at a series of 3 seepage areas, containing some of the higher quality remnant vegetation in the park. Proposed activities include woody invasive removal, low-intensity hydrological and soil stabilization improvements (e.g. brush wattles), and dividing and transplanting understory plants to denuded areas. Larger scale hydrological restoration is not included. Two of these seep areas were in the same area that was covered in a Legacy Funds grant from Met Council, but seep enhancement was not included (Moriarty, Ramsey County Natural Resource Manager, pers. comm.). The northern seep is within the same area as the original Bluffs Restoration project.

Pilot Knob Hill Prairie Establishment included establishment mowing and invasive species control in the Phase II area, where a first burn is scheduled for spring 2013. The landowner was recently awarded a competitive National Trust for Historic Preservation grant, to bury the utility lines and replant. This will complete the defragmentation of the prairie, which is well underway with the removal and re-planting of a former road.

Four Wild and Scenic River projects on protected private land are well underway, totaling about 25 Trust Fund acres. These projects entail oak savanna reconstruction, and invasive species control in forested acres. Federal and private match is secured. Two of the Rum River projects have shoreline restoration funded by DNR Shorelands Program. Landowner outreach in the Cannon River WSR area outreach is well underway by our partners, gathering several positive responses.

Prairie, savanna and woodland establishment at Pond Dakota Mission began with strategic mowing, spraying of invasive weeds, and volunteer efforts to continue the removal of woody material from the restoration area, including a 100 person volunteer event in fall 2011.

Two acres of upland woody invasive buckthorn and Siberian elm removal were completed at Ike's Creek including a 97 person volunteer event, and is scheduled to continue in spring 2012. Acreage and amount spent are not included in this report (nor reimbursement requests) until the final agreement is reached with the City of Bloomington. On-site planning meetings with DNR Fisheries trout specialist and MN Valley NWR staff (the downstream landowner) were conducted.

Monitoring of 26 existing/former MeCC projects included site visits at 11 sites: Arcola Mills, Central Corridor I, Heritage Village City Park Phase I, Hidden Valley City Park, Lost Valley SNA, Indian Mound Regional Park, North Mississippi Regional Park, Pilot Knob Hill Phase I, Six Mile Creek, Spring Lake Park Reserve (Dakota Co.), and St. Croix Trail Rx Burn. We are currently developing our evaluation template. Maintenance is underway at two sites.

All financial numbers are as of 5 December 2011.

Activity Status as of August 1, 2012:

Over 132 LCCMR acres of habitat restoration, enhancement, and maintenance are currently underway, and we are on track to meet or exceed our original acreage goals. Over 30 more acres of restoration/enhancement projects are in an advanced development phase.

Central Corridor Phase II (13 Trust Fund acres, 26 total acres) is well underway with woody invasives removal including a 100-person volunteer event in fall 2011, and seeding of a fallow farm field.

The Battle Creek seeps project is underway, with the majority of field work to be completed this fall.

Pilot Knob Hill Prairie Establishment included a first burn in spring 2013. The site is on the list for burying of utility lines for de-fragmentation and historic vista, using matching funds by a National Trust for Historic Preservation grant. Invasive species control is being sustained through crew and volunteer work, including a small group that works on the site on a regular basis, and a public volunteer event in May.

Four Wild and Scenic River projects on protected private land are well underway. Landowner outreach continues on multiple fronts, but despite ours and our partners' efforts, we do not anticipate any projects developing in the Cannon River WSR for this MeCC phase. As an indirect result of our outreach efforts to private landowners, projects on public land were developed. This includes forest restoration, which began with buckthorn control at Andover's Martin's Meadows in the Rum River watershed; and prairie restoration contracted for fall 2012. The Cedar Creek Conservation Area project with Anoka Co. Parks is in the advanced development phase.

Prairie, savanna and woodland establishment at Pond Dakota Mission continued with strategic mowing, and herbaceous invasive control with Greening crew and Conservation Corps Minnesota, Youth Job Corps.

Additional upland invasive species control was conducted on the banks of Ike's Creek, including a 35 person private corporate volunteer event. Final agreement was reached with the City of Bloomington. On-site planning meetings with DNR Fisheries trout specialist and MN Valley NWR staff (the downstream landowner) were conducted.

Monitoring of 26 existing/former MeCC projects included site visits at 4 additional sites: Camp Waub-o-Jeeg, Afton State Park, Spring Lake Regional Park Reserve (Dakota Co), and River Park in Brooklyn Park for a total of 15 sites visited to date. Maintenance and enhancement activities are underway at six sites totaling 21 LCCMR acres.

Oak savanna restoration and forest enhancement is underway at Spring Lake Regional Park in Scott County, as is terrace forest enhancement at Freeman Park in Shorewood with buckthorn treatment with Greening crew and Conservation Corps Minnesota. Forest enhancement at Bridgewater Park in Medina is no longer moving forward as a project.

All financial numbers are as of 30 June 2012.

Activity Status as of February 1, 2013:

Over 160 LCCMR acres of habitat restoration, enhancement, and maintenance are currently underway, and we are on track to meet or exceed our original acreage goals of 121. In addition, restoration and enhancement of another 170 acres are underway with match, exceeding our original acreage goals of 146. This sums to over 330 total acres currently underway.

Central Corridor Phase II was expanded to include Phase III work area, and another 26 total acres were seeded to prairie in fall 2012. Establishment mowing occurred on the acres seeded in fall 2011.

The Battle Creek seeps project saw the completion of buckthorn control, forest understory planting, and log check dam and brush wattle installation.

Pilot Knob Hill Prairie Establishment, invasive species control is being sustained through crew and volunteer work, including a small group that works on the site on a regular basis. Defragmentation took a huge step forward with utility pole removal using a relatively large amount of matching funds by a National Trust for Historic Preservation grant that the City received. .

Four Wild and Scenic River projects on protected private land are well underway, and a fifth is being considered, which would be our first in the Cannon River WSR. These entail forest invasives control, forest tree planting with a volunteer event, and shoreline restoration with matching funds, and a prairie seeding planned for spring 2013. Two projects on public land in the WSR areas are well underway, with a 67 total acre prairie seeding at Cedar Creek Conservation Area, now expanding to include a spring tree and shrub volunteer planting in spring 2013, in adjacent acres; and site prep in advance of a spring 2013 prairie seeding at the Martin's Meadows project.

Prairie, savanna and woodland establishment at Pond Dakota Mission continued with strategic mowing, and herbaceous invasive control. A buckthorn control project in adjacent woodland is in the development phase.

Additional upland invasive species control was conducted on the banks of Ike's Creek. Partners now include DNR Fisheries and MN Valley NWR.

Oak savanna restoration and forest enhancement is underway at Spring Lake Regional Park in Scott County, with woody encroachment removal, site preparation for spring seeding, and planting of 30 oak trees by Greening crew and an 80 person volunteer event.

Terrace forest enhancement at Freeman Park in Shorewood with buckthorn treatment with Greening crew and Conservation Corps Minnesota is nearly complete.

Status as of August 1, 2013:

Over 150 Trust Fund acres of habitat restoration, enhancement, and maintenance are currently underway, and we are on track to meet or exceed our original acreage goals of 121. The majority of projects are well advanced, and we are sustaining the invasive species control and supplemental efforts. Our Central Corridor project is being expanded to include local acorn planting. Our Wild and Scenic River project has seen some growth during this period, as expansion at one of the Rum River sites to include shoreline restoration is pending, and agreements have been reached for our first Cannon River project and is scheduled to begin within the next month.

Status as of February 1, 2014:

Our Wild and Scenic River: Cannon River project saw significant progress with a combination of invasive removal by contractor and a volunteer event, as we continue to enhance this forest. DNR Shorelands program has funded adjacent shoreline restoration. The savanna restoration at Spring Lake Park is nearly complete with a 30 acre seedling of the understory layer. Establishment mowing was conducted at the Central Corridor prairie restoration areas.

At Martin's Meadows, the prairie was seeded and red cedar woody encroachment as well as buckthorn was removed from the site.

Establishment of the prairie seeding and tree plantings continued at Cedar Creek Conservation Area. At Valley Park, buckthorn control and seeding efforts continued in the oak forest area. At Pilot Knob Hill, seeding and oak grove planting continued, engaging school groups and other volunteers.

We have completed site visits to 26 projects. Interns were engaged in the fall to visit and photograph several of these project sites employing a new generation of hand-held GPS units which geo-reference photographs.

Status as of August 1, 2014:

Buckthorn removal at Katherine Abbot Park SE Unit was completed, and native plugging planned.

Status as of February 1, 2015:

Additional buckthorn control was conducted at Martin's Meadows and Wild and Scenic Rivers - Rum, based on the field evaluations, improving the timing of the work for easier identification and mobility. Native plugging was completed in select cut areas at Katherine Abbot Park SE Unit.

Plans for supplemental seeding/plugging, with an emphasis on improving pollinator habitat, have been set for dormant season and/or spring seeding/plugging. Plans for further site visit evaluations are being made.

Final Report Summary, August 17, 2015:

Over the course of the grant period, Great River Greening restored:

- 191 acres of upland habitat with Trust Fund dollars, exceeding our goal of 121 acres
- an additional 192 acres of upland habitat using leveraged non-state funds, exceeding our goal of 146 acres
- a total of 383 acres.

At the conclusion of the grant, all sites were signed and supplemental seeding and plugging completed at several sites with an emphasis on improving pollinator habitat.

Over 2,000 volunteers contributed to restoration work on upland habitats, including over 500 youth. Volunteers planted over 4,800 forbs and grasses, and over 2,200 trees and shrubs.

At Central Corridor Phase II and III, Greening restored prairie-savanna through removal of woody invasives, seeding of a fallow farm field, and prescribed fire. Undesirable vegetation cover was reduced to close to 5%. The project was expanded to include seeding a Phase III work area to prairie in fall 2012, adding 26 total acres. Establishment mowing was conducted at all Central Corridor prairie restoration areas. Supplemental seeding was conducted in spring 2015 with an emphasis on improving pollinator habitat. Acreage of upland habitat restored: 28 acres and an additional 22 acres through leveraged non-state funds.

The Battle Creek Regional Park (Seeps Portion) project targeted a series of 3 seepage areas containing some of the higher quality remnant vegetation in the park. Activities included woody invasive removal, low-intensity hydrological and soil stabilization improvements (e.g. brush wattles), and forest understory planting. Acreage of upland habitat restored: 6 acres and an additional 1 acre through leveraged non-state funds.

At Pilot Knob Hill Phase II prairie establishment, invasive species control work, seeding, and oak grove planting was completed by the Greening crew and volunteers, including a small group that works on the site regularly. A prescribed burn was completed in 2013, and de-fragmentation took a huge step forward with utility pole removal using matching funds from a National Trust for Historic Preservation grant that the City received. Acreage of upland habitat restored: 1 acre and 14 additional acres through leveraged non-state funds.

To help preserve the natural quality of the Rum, Cannon, and St. Croix Rivers, Greening completed five projects on private lands protected by easements: three DNR Wild and Scenic River Easements (27 acres), one Minnesota Land Trust Rum River Easement (7 acres), and one Standing Cedars Conservancy St. Croix WSR Easement (0.5 acres). Work included: oak grove tree planting and prairie seeding; invasive species control in forested areas; and shoreline restoration on two of the sites.

At Martin's Meadows Open Space (Andover), prairie and wetland habitats were restored and a slope stabilized. Prairie habitat was restored through site preparation followed by seeding. A shrub wetland complex was restored through removing buckthorn. One acre of slope was stabilized through habitat replanting and seeding. Acreage of upland habitat restored: 11 acres and an additional 2 acres through leveraged non-state funds.

At Cedar Creek Conservation Area (Anoka Co Parks - Oak Grove and Andover), prairie and oak savanna habitats were restored through prairie seeding, planting of bur oak trees, and control of invasive species. Approximately 1500 small trees and shrubs were planted and caged by volunteers, and 2500 planted by landowner. Supplemental plugging was conducted in spring 2015 with an emphasis on improving pollinator habitat. The site has displayed exemplary germination of forbs and grasses in all but the wettest areas. Acreage of upland habitat restored: 43 acres and an additional 36 acres through leveraged non-state funds.

At Pond Dakota Mission, prairie, savanna, and woodland restoration work was conducted, controlling invasive species and expanding native vegetation communities. Work involved strategic mowing, spraying of invasive weeds, and removal of woody material. Work was conducted by the Greening crew, Conservation Corps Minnesota, Youth Job Corps, and volunteers. Acreage of upland habitat restored: 2 acres, and an additional 4 acres through leveraged non-state funds.

At Ike's Creek, we restored/thinned the canopy to a woodland structure and removed invasive shrubs. Herbaceous seeding and plugging into the denuded ground resulted in approximately 80% coverage consisting of a mix of early successional native and non-native herbaceous species, with the native species currently becoming dominant by early summer. Several volunteer events were conducted. Acreage of upland habitat restored: 10 acres and an additional 10 acres through leveraged non-state funds.

Monitoring of 26 existing MeCC projects; Maintenance, Enhancement, Upgrades on Select Sites as Needed: Greening completed site visits to 26 projects and conducted maintenance work at six sites. Several project site visits included photographs by interns, employing a new generation of hand-held GPS units which geo-references photographs. We conducted maintenance work at:

- Arcola Mills: garlic mustard control
- Afton Forest – For the Birds (Afton State Park): provided materials for the installation of fencing to protect a sample of tree plantings
- Central Corridor Phase I: controlled burning, mowing, and invasive weed management/maintenance
- Hidden Valley City Park: control of herbaceous and woody invasive species
- Lake St. Croix Beach: prescribed burn, control of woody vegetation
- Pilot Knob Phase I: sustained invasives control

Acreage of upland habitat maintained: 18 acres and an additional 22 acres through leveraged non-state funds.

At Spring Lake Regional Park Phase III (Scott County), oak savanna and forest habitats were restored. After removal of woody encroachment, mowing, and prescribed burns, 30 oak trees and approximately 800 forbs/grasses were planted with help from volunteers. The savanna understory was subsequently seeded using 'multiple seed rains' technique). Acreage of upland habitat restored: 21 acres and an additional 19 acres through leveraged non-state funds.

At Freeman Park (Shorewood), terrace forest enhancement was completed with treatment and removal of buckthorn by the Greening crew and Conservation Corps Minnesota Youth Job Corps, with graminoid seeding in the upland area. Acreage of upland habitat restored: 7 acres and an additional 7 acres through leveraged non-state funds.

At Valley Park (Mendota Heights), oak woodland and forest target communities were restored through buckthorn control and seeding and plugging of native graminoid species. Work was completed by the Greening crew, Conservation Corp of Minnesota, a contractor, and volunteers. Acreage of upland habitat restored: 2 acres and an additional 5 acres through leveraged non-state funds.

At Katherine Abbott Park Phase I – SE sub unit (Mahtomedi), restoration was completed in the southeast section of the forest (with the majority of phase I included in the 2013 appropriation). Non-native invasive shrub coverage was greatly reduced, non-native invasive garlic mustard was contained, and native graminoids promoted through plugging and seeding. Acreage of upland habitat restored: 6 acres and an additional 2 acres through leveraged non-state funds.

Increased monitoring led to improved feedback and greater information for guiding restoration work. Greening has adopted the use of hand-held GPS units that provide geo-referenced photographs, which can then be converted to waypoints by MnDNR freeware, for use in ArcMap GIS software. This procedure is Greening's new standard as we are finding it easy to use, affordable, and quite informative being able to view photos located on a map along with when they were taken. Monitoring confirmed that sustained invasive control continues to be the primary challenge to restoration; to supplement the maintenance commitment of project site landowners, our continued engagement of community

members, and in particular the large number of youth during this allocation, we feel has the potential to be part of the long term solution to sustained invasive control and restoration maintenance (among other benefits).

ACTIVITY 2: Restoration and Enhancement of Wetland/Shoreline Habitats

Description: We will restore 2 acres of wetland habitat and 0.18 mile of shoreline, plus an additional 1 ac and 0.14 mile using leveraged non-state funds (3 ac and 0.32 mile total), through control of invasive species, seeding/planting, and associated activities.

Summary Budget Information for Activity 2:

ENRTF Budget: \$ 125,000
 Amount Spent: \$ 124,933
 Balance: \$ 67

Activity Completion Date:

Outcome	Completion Date	Budget
1. Restore 2 acres of wetland habitat and 0.18 mile of shoreline through control of invasive species, seeding/planting, and associated activities. Anticipated milestones include 0.18 mi shoreline planted and seeded by 12/31/11.	6/30/14	\$ 125,000

Activity Status as of February 1, 2012:

The full 0.18 mi and 2 acres of habitat restoration and enhancement are underway in the planning stages.

At Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park, intensive planning and scheduling has occurred. Using matching funds, engineering services for signed plans, soil sampling, permitting, and construction oversight of re-grading, have been contracted. Work is scheduled to begin in spring 2012.

At Heritage Village Park, all work is scheduled and will begin in spring 2012.

All financial numbers are as of 5 December 2011.

Activity Status as of August 1, 2012:

The full 0.18 mi and 2 acres of habitat restoration and enhancement are underway.

At Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park, the shoreline restoration plan has been drafted and approved by the Helena Township (LGU) and Army Corp as part of wetland/shoreline permitting. MN DNR has completed the 60-day public comment process and will be issuing their permit. Advanced draft of erosion control plan has been written with Scott County, for submittal to PCA, for an erosion control RFP target release date in August. A large volunteer shoreline planting event is scheduled for fall 2012.

At Heritage Village Park, wetland restoration is well underway, with invasive species spraying and a controlled burn in spring 2012 to prepare the site for seeding and planting in the fall of 2012.

All financial numbers are as of 30 June 2012.

Activity Status as of February 1, 2013:

A total of 0.27 LCCMR miles of shoreline restoration is currently underway, and we are on track to exceed our original shoreline goals of 0.18. Restoration of another 0.19 miles is underway with match, exceeding our original goals of 0.14 mile. This sums to nearly a half mile of shoreline restoration currently underway, with plans for additional restoration.

Channel reconfiguration, seeding, and lakeshore plugging with volunteers were completed at our shoreline project at Cedar Lake Farm Regional park.

Burning, spraying, regarding, and seeding were completed at our shoreline/wetland project at Heritage Village Park.

Status as of August 1, 2013:

Establishment and supplemental seeding/plugging were the activities at our two wetland/shoreline sites over the past six months essentially consisted of establishment, including invasive species control, and supplemental seeding/plugging on the shorelines and wetland.

A total of 2 Trust Fund acres and 0.28 Trust Fund miles of shoreline are well underway.

Status as of February 1, 2014:

At both Cedar Lake Regional Park and Heritage Village Park, establishment of the shoreline restorations was sustained with spot treatments and monitoring.

Status as of August 1, 2014:

Supplemental seeding at Heritage Village Park was planned during this period.

Status as of February 1, 2015:

Budget figures were adjusted; we are now showing a remaining balance of \$112 for Result 2, instead of \$0 reported earlier.

Final Report Summary, August 17, 2015:

Over the course of the grant period, Great River Greening restored a total of 0.26 miles of shoreland habitat with Trust Fund dollars, exceeding our goal of 0.18 miles. Using leveraged non-state funds, Greening restored an additional 0.20 mile of shoreland habitat, exceeding objectives of 0.15 miles, for a total of 0.46 miles of shoreland. At the conclusion of the grant, all sites were signed.

Nearly 500 volunteers contributed to restoration work on shoreland habitats, including nearly 200 youth. Volunteers planted over 22,000 forbs and grasses, and over 161 trees and shrubs.

At Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park shoreline restoration, Greening's work during this phase included shoreline restoration and the creation of a wetland/prairie complex. This project is part of a larger engineered plan to create an enhanced lake access to coincide with the long term environmental education goals of the site. Volunteers planted approximately 4,000 native plugs and 35 shrubs. Greening also oversaw establishment maintenance which included mowing and exotic species treatment. Shoreland habitat restored: 0.11 mile plus an additional 0.11 mile through leveraged non-state funds.

Restoration project at Heritage Village Park wetland and shoreline diversified native vegetation and habitat in wet prairie and wetland areas. Work involved mowing, treatment of invasive species and weeds, prescribed burning, seeding, and supplemental planting of shrubs, grasses, and wild flowers by volunteers. Miles of shoreland restored: 0.15 mile and an additional 0.09 mile through leveraged non-state funds.

V. DISSEMINATION:

Description:

Project results will be shared via periodic reports to landowner partners and other funding partners, as well as the larger Metro Corridors partnership.

Great River Greening will periodically distribute information about the program through our e-postcard, 'Volunteer Opportunities' mailings, donor mailings and communications (including newsletter and annual report), at volunteer restoration events, and through our website www.greatrivergreening.org. We reach over 3,700 people through our database.

Status as of February 1, 2012:

Status as of August 1, 2012:

Volunteer event descriptions acknowledging Trust Fund contributions and qualitative results were emailed to over 5,000 subscribers in July 2011, Feb 2012, and July 2012 in advance of our spring and fall volunteer event seasons.

Information about the Metro Conservation Corridors is on our website in the Initiatives and Volunteer Events sections at <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/> which receives over 1,200 visits per month.

A summary of results from our partnership with Metro Conservation Corridors was included in email marketing in January 2012, as part of our 2011 annual report, reaching over 5,000 subscribers. Currently, 300 hard copies of the annual report are also being distributed.

Status as of February 1, 2013:

Volunteer event descriptions acknowledging Trust Fund contributions and qualitative results are planned for distribution to over 5,000 subscribers in February 2013 and July 2013 in advance of our spring and fall volunteer event seasons.

Information about the Metro Conservation Corridors is on our website in the Initiatives and Volunteer Events sections at <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/> which receives over 1,200 visits per month.

The Isanti County News reported on a fall 2012 Greening volunteer event in the Wild and Scenic Rum River project area, complete with correct acknowledgement language, on October 31. The link is: <http://isanticountynews.com/2012/10/31/restoration-effort-preserves-20-acres-of-floodplain-forest-along-rum-river/>

Status as of August 1, 2013:

Volunteer event descriptions acknowledging Trust Fund contributions and qualitative results were distributed to over 5,000 subscribers in February 2013 and July 2013 in advance of our spring and fall volunteer event seasons.

Information about the Metro Conservation Corridors is on our website in the Initiatives and Volunteer Events sections at <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/> which receives over 1,200 visits per month.

In late July, the Pioneer Press featured an article on the conservation grazing activities at Pilot Knob Hill, complete with correct acknowledgement language. The link is: http://www.twincities.com/breakingnews/ci_23732772/horses-chew-grass-its-conservation-grazing-latest-new,

Status as of February 1, 2014:

Volunteer event descriptions acknowledging Trust Fund contributions and qualitative results were distributed to over 6,000 subscribers in advance of our spring 2014 event season.

Information about the Metro Conservation Corridors program is on our website at <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/what-we-do/metro-area/> which receives over 1,200 visits per month.

A feature on our website about the upcoming Katherine Abbott Project and spring volunteer event can be found at <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/katherine-abbott-spring-2014/>. The press release about the Katherine Abbott project going to major media venues and community newsletters will include acknowledgment of Trust Fund contributions.

Status as of August 1, 2014:

Information about the Metro Conservation Corridors program is on our website at <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/what-we-do/metro-area/> which receives an average of 1,500 visits per month.

While a volunteer event at Katherine Abbott Park was held in the spring of 2014, it was ultimately contained to the areas enhanced under the 2013 appropriation only.

Status as of February 1, 2015:

Information about the Metro Conservation Corridors program is on our website at <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/what-we-do/metro-area/> which receives an average of 1,500 visits per month.

While a volunteer event at Katherine Abbott Park was held in the fall of 2014, it was ultimately contained to the areas enhanced under the 2013 appropriation only.

Final Report Summary, August 17, 2015:

Volunteer event descriptions acknowledging Trust Fund contributions and qualitative results were emailed to Greening's e-subscribers in July 2011, Feb 2012, July 2012, February 2013, July 2013, and spring 2014 in advance of our spring and fall volunteer event seasons. Over the course of the grants, the number of subscribers increased from about 5,000 to over 6,000.

Information about the Metro Conservation Corridors is on our website in the Initiatives and Volunteer Events sections at <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/>. Over the course of the grant, the visits to the Greening website increased from approximately 1,200 to approximately 1,500 visits per month.

A summary of results from our partnership with Metro Conservation Corridors was included in email marketing in January 2012, as part of our 2011 annual report, reaching over 5,000 subscribers. Approximately 300 hard copies of the annual report were also distributed.

Two press articles, complete with correct ENRTF acknowledgement, were released during the grant period.

- The Mendota Heights Patch reported in April 2012 on continued restoration at Pilot Knob Historic Site: <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/4.23.12-Restoration-Continues-at-Pilot-Knob-Historic-Site-Mendota-Heights-MN-Patch.pdf>.
- The Isanti County News reported on a fall 2012 Greening volunteer event in the Wild and Scenic Rum River project area: <http://isanticountynews.com/2012/10/31/restoration-effort-preserves-20-acres-of-floodplain-forest-along-rum-river/>.

An additional five press articles, missing correct acknowledgement despite our efforts, disseminated information about the projects.

- The Bloomington Crow reported in April 2012 on a volunteer event focused on removing invasive species at Ike's Creek: <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/4.27.12-Chamber-Community-Outreach-Committee-Pulls-Buckthorn-at-Ike-Bloomington-Crow.pdf>.
- The Pioneer Press reported on May 3, 2012 on an upcoming volunteer event to remove invasive species and planting prairie seeds at Pilot Knob Hill: <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/5.3.12-Volunteers-at-Pilot-Knob-Mendota-Heights-Pioneer-Press.pdf>.
- The Mendota Heights Patch reported on May 8, 2012 on the same volunteer at Pilot Knob Hill, discussing the work to restore a prairie with a high biodiversity of native plant species: <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/5.8.12-Pilot-Knob-Clean-up-Draws-Volunteers-Public-Officials-Mendota-Heights-MN-Patch.pdf>.
- The Sun Current reported in June 2012 on a volunteer event and the history of restoration at Ike's Creek: <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/6.27.12-Bringing-new-life-to-a-Bloomington-Creek-Sun-Current.pdf>.
- The Path, a newsletter published by DNR Division of Parks and Trails for its employees, reported in November 2012 on a volunteer event at a DNR Wild and Scenic River easement along the Rum River. See page 4: <http://www.greatrivergreening.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/12.11.12-DNR-Parks-and-Trails-Internal-Newsletter.pdf>.

Greening is in active partnership with landowners, other land managers, service providers, conservation peers, and volunteers resulting in a dynamic and timely exchange of information and results.

VI. PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY:

A. ENRTF Budget:

Budget Category	\$ Amount	Explanation
Personnel:	\$ 88,971	Benefit rates subject to change with change in ins. premiums and 401k participation. Wiley Buck, Project Manager/ Restoration Ecologist, \$11,600 (29% benefit) 10% FTE; Todd Rexine, Stephen Thomforde. Ecologists. \$17,900 (14% and 24% benefit) 15% FTE; Wayne Ostlie, Dir of Conservation Programs \$2,750 (8% benefit) 4 % FTE; William Smith, Director of Finance \$4500 (24% benefit) 6 % FTE; Julia Wells, Administrative Assistant \$700 (20% benefit) 24% FTE; Sean Wickhem, Field Coordinator \$26,300 (16% benefit) 62% FTE; Restoration Technicians incl. Seasonal Burn Crew \$28,300 (8% benefit) 94% FTE; Jen Kader, Community Engagement Manager \$5,700 (15% benefits) 11 % FTE
Service Contracts	\$ 174,987	Contracts with restoration vendors for prairie reconstruction, direct hardwood seeding, mowing, tree removal, tree planting, phosphorous trap installation, earthmoving/excavation, burning, etc. Vendors TBD upon bidding process; bidders list will include MCC.
Equipment/Tools/Supplies:	\$ 108,947	Herbicides; Equipment fuel, lubes, and replacement parts; Chainsaw safety supplies (Personal Protective Equipment). Seeds, plugs, plants, mulch, erosion control materials, herbivory protection

MeCC VI - Restoring Our Lands and Waters (2.3)

Capital Equipment over \$3,500:	\$ -0-	n/a
Travel Expenses in MN:	\$ 10,292	
Other:	\$ 16,803	Volunteer Event Supplies: Tents/tables/chairs rentals; portable toilet rentals; overnight security; granola bars/juice/water/fruit/sandwiches; safety glasses and work gloves. Burn permit fees.
TOTAL ENRTF BUDGET:	\$ 400,000	

Explanation of Use of Classified Staff: n/a

Explanation of Capital Expenditures Greater Than \$3,500: n/a

Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) funded with this ENRTF appropriation: 2.3 FTE

B. Other Funds:

Source of Funds	\$ Amount Proposed	\$ Amount Spent	Use of Other Funds
Non-state			
Scott WMO	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park Shoreline Restoration
Cargill Global Partnership Fund	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park Shoreline Restoration and Freeman Park
Ramsey County Parks	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	Battle Creek
South Washington WD	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	Central Corridor Phase II; Phase I Establishment.
City of Inver Grove Heights	\$ 13,000	\$ 13,000	Heritage Village Park Wetland and Shoreline Restoration
City of Mendota Heights	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	Valley Park Oak Woodland Enhancement: Buckthorn, Garlic Mustard, and modest seeding/plugging
Aggregate Industries	\$ 500	\$ 500	Valley Park
Harris Mechanical	\$ 500	\$ 500	Valley Park
City of Mendota Heights	\$ 65,800	\$ 65,800	Pilot Knob Hill Phase II
Cargill Corporation	\$ 500	\$ 500	Pilot Knob Hill Phase II
Dakota County Farm and Natural Areas Program	\$ 2,200	\$ 2,200	Pilot Knob Hill Phase II
City of Bloomington	\$ 42,746	\$ 42,746	1) Pond Dakota Mission Establishment 2) Ike's Creek
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	Rum River Wild and Scenic River Easement Restorations
Private Landowners w/ Easements	\$ 6,850	\$ 6,850	Rum, Cannon, St. Croix WSR Easement Restorations
Arcola Mills Historic Foundation	\$ 500	\$ 500	Arcola Mills Historic Foundation Maintenance
City of Lake St. Croix Beach	\$ 700	\$ 700	St. Croix Recreational Trail Prairie Burn

MeCC VI - Restoring Our Lands and Waters (2.3)

City of Savage	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	Hidden Valley Park dry hill prairie Maintenance
City of Andover	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	Martin's Meadows. Also 15K in-kind for erosion control
Scott County	\$ 44,000	\$ 44,000	Spring Lake Regional Park
MN Valley Electric Trust	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	Spring Lake Regional Park
City of Shorewood	\$ 11,500	\$ 11,500	Freeman Park
Anoka Co. Parks	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	Cedar Creek Conservation Area, (cash and in-kind)
Viking Gas	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	Rum River Shoreline planning
US FWS	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	Rum River Shoreline/Upland planning
City of Mahtomedi	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	Katherine Abbott Park restoration
State			
DNR Shorelands	\$ 26,000	\$ 26,000	Rum River Shoreline Restoration planning
TOTAL OTHER FUNDS:	\$ 451, 796	\$ 451, 796	

VII. PROJECT STRATEGY:

A. Project Partners:

Project partners include: Anoka County Parks; City of Andover; City of Bloomington; City of Inver Grove Heights; City of Lake St. Croix Beach; City of Mahtomedi; City of Savage; City of Shorewood; Minnesota DNR Wild & Scenic Rivers Program; Minnesota Land Trust; City of Mendota Heights; National Park Service; Ramsey County Parks; Scott County Parks; Scott Watershed Management Organization; and South Washington Watershed District.

B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy:

The need and opportunities for restoration in project areas will continue into the foreseeable future, especially in light of climate change, increasing development pressures, and other threats. Great River Greening – as a non-profit conservation organization – is committed to working with our partners into the future to identify financial resources to manage their lands where these investments have been placed. While landowner partners must agree to manage their lands over the long term, where appropriate, and where the need exists, we envision approaching ENRTF to be *one of several* funding streams to that end. ENRTF funding helps to ensure that we actively guide the long term adaptive management of the site.

C. Spending History:

Funding Source	M.L. 2003 or FY 2004-05	M.L. 2005 or FY 2006-07	M.L. 2007 or FY 2008	M.L. 2008 or FY 2009	M.L. 2009 or FY 2010
ENRTF	\$ 124,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 111,000	\$ 155,000

VIII. ACQUISITION/RESTORATION LIST:

See Restoration List attachment.

IX. MAP(S):

See Map attachment.

X. RESEARCH ADDENDUM:

n/a

XI. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

Periodic work plan status update reports will be submitted not later than February 1, 2012, August 1, 2012, February 1, 2013, August 1, 2013, February 1, 2014, August 1, 2014, and February 1, 2015. A final report and associated products will be submitted between June 30 and August 1, 2015 as requested by the LCCMR.

Final Attachment A: Budget Detail for 2011 Projects												
Project Title: MeCC6-2.3: Restoring our Lands and Waters												
Project Manager Name: Wiley Buck												
Trust Fund Appropriation: \$ 400,000												
1) See list of non-eligible expenses, do not include any of these items in your budget sheet												
2) Remove any budget item lines not applicable												
2011 Trust Fund Budget	Result 1 Budget	Amount Spent 6/30/15	Balance 6/30/15	Result 2 Budget	Amount Spent 6/30/15	Balance 6/30/15	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BALANCE 6/30/15				
BUDGET ITEM	Restoration and Enhancement of Upland Habitats			Restoration and Enhancement of Wetland/Shoreline Habitats								
PERSONNEL: benefits subject to change with change in ins. premiums and 401k participation.	\$ 76,861	\$ 76,861	\$ -	\$ 12,110	\$ 12,110	\$ -	\$ 88,971	\$ -				
Wiley Buck, Project Manager/ Restoration Ecologist, \$21,100 (29% benefit) 36% FTE												
Todd Rexine, Stephen Thomforde. Ecologists. \$32,600 (14% and 24% benefit) 56% FTE												
Wayne Ostlie, Dir of Conservation Programs \$5,000 (8% benefit) 8% FTE												
William Smith, Director of Finance \$8,200 (24% benefit) 10% FTE												
Julia Wells, Administrative Assistant \$1200 (20% benefit) 4% FTE												
Sean Wickhem, Field Coordinator \$47,800 (16% benefit) 112% FTE												
Restoration Technicians incl. Seasonal Burn Crew \$51,500 (8% benefit) 170% FTE												
Jen Kader Community Engagement Manager \$10,400 (15% benefits) 20% FTE												
Contracts												
Other contracts Contracts with restoration vendors for prairie reconstruction, direct hardwood seeding, mowing, tree removal, tree planting, phosphorous trap installation, earthmoving/excavation, burning, etc. Vendors TBD upon bidding process; bidders list will include MCC.	\$ 96,024	\$ 96,024	\$ -	\$ 78,963	\$ 78,963	\$ -	\$ 174,987	\$ -				
Supplies (list specific categories)								\$ -				
Site prep supplies: Herbicides; Equipment fuel, lubes, and replacement parts; Chainsaw safety supplies (Personal Protective Equipment)	\$ 4,215	\$ 4,215	\$ -	\$ 523	\$ 523	\$ -	\$ 4,738	\$ -				
Seeds, plugs, plants, mulch, erosion control materials, herbivory protection	\$ 73,500	\$ 72,924	\$ 576	\$ 30,709	\$ 30,709	\$ -	\$ 104,209	\$ 576				
Travel expenses in Minnesota	\$ 9,011	\$ 8,351	\$ 660	\$ 1,281	\$ 1,281	\$ -	\$ 10,292	\$ 660				
Other												
Volunteer Event Supplies: Tents/tables/chairs rentals; portable toilet rentals; overnight security; granola bars/juice/water/fruit/sandwiches; safety glasses and work gloves.	\$ 15,389	\$ 15,171	\$ 218	\$ 1,389	\$ 1,347	\$ 42	\$ 16,778	\$ 260				
Burn Permit Fees	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 25	\$ -	\$ 25	\$ 25	\$ 25				
COLUMN TOTAL	\$275,000	\$273,546	\$1,454	\$125,000	\$124,933	\$67	\$400,000	\$1,521				

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2011 Final Acquisition/Restoration List

Project Title: MeCC VI-2.3: Restoring Our Lands and Waters

Project Manager Name: Wiley Buck

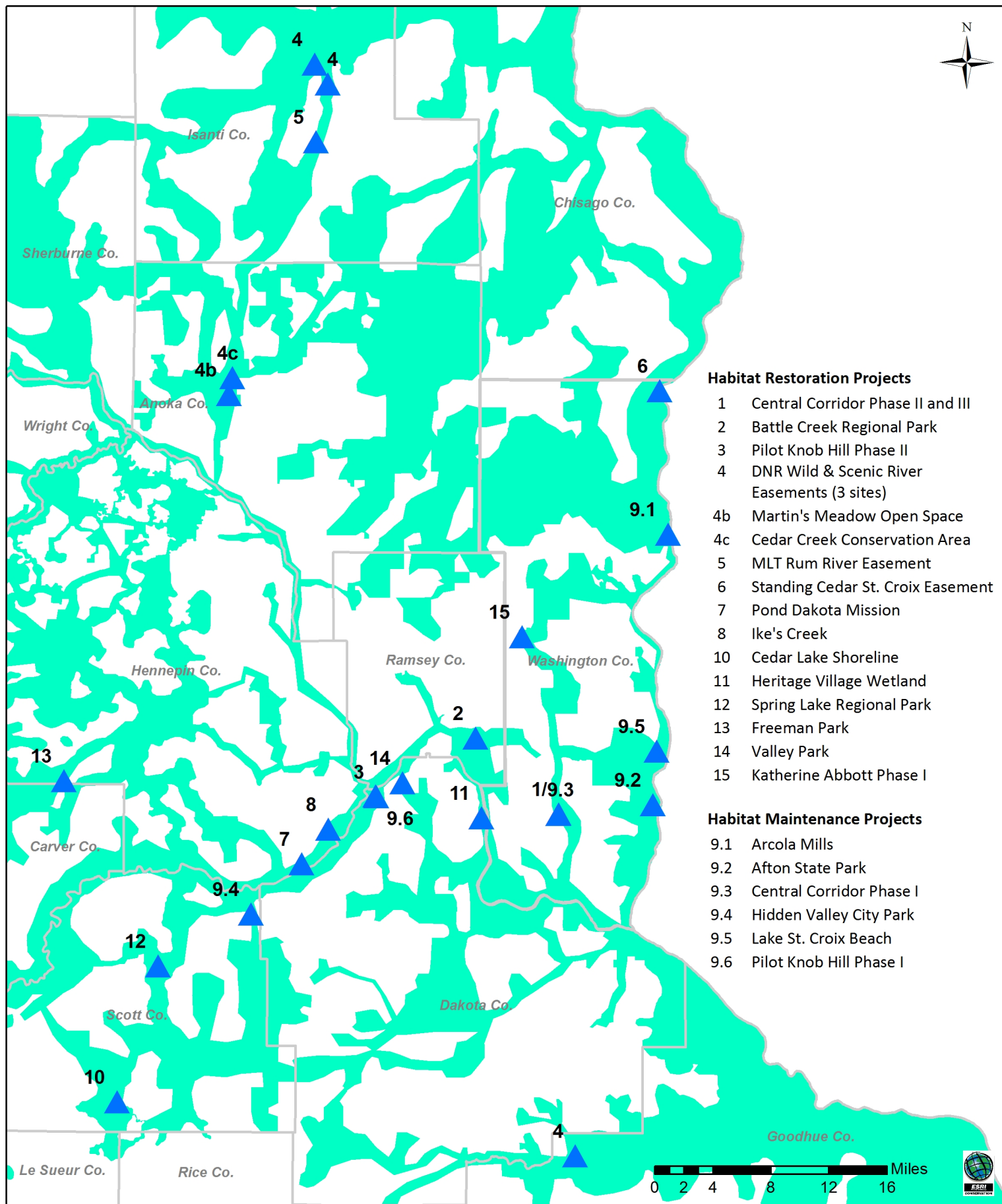
M.L. 2011 ENRTF Appropriation: \$ 400,000

#	Acquisition or Restoration Parcel Name	Geographical Coordinates (Provide Latitude/Longitude OR UTM-X/UTM-Y)		Ecosystem Description	Ecological Significance	Activity Description	# of Acres	# of Shoreline Miles (if applicable)	Status
		Latitude or UTM-X	Longitude or UTM-Y						
1	Central Corridor (aka South Washington) Phase II and III	-92.909	44.864	Prairie	Expand Prairie Remnant; shares corridor with Lost Valley SNA	Woody invasive removal, seeding a fallow farm field, prescribed fire, and seed planting.	28		Completed
2b	Battle Creek Regional Park - Seeps Portion	-93.027	44.938	Three seep areas	Some higher quality native vegetation including skunk cabbage, marsh marigolds, and robust forest understory	Buckthorn cut and log dams installed. With youth group, plugs planted, and brush wattles installed.	6		Completed
3	Pilot Knob Hill Phase II	-93.168	44.881	Prairie, Oak Savanna	SGCN priority location and ecosystem; connected to Ft Snelling State Park on Minn. River	Utility poles removed w/ lg match and disturbed areas seeded and planted; 12 oaks planted; inv spp control sustained.	1		Completed
4	DNR Wild and Scenic River Easements: Rum, Cannon	Rum: M)-93.235298 P)-93.259201 Cannon: CB)-92.888	Rum: M)45.59479 P)45.614101 Cannon: CB)44.5204	Riparian, Forest, Prairie, Savanna, Woodland, Wetland Forest enhancement, volunteer event	WSR contain over 500 miles of fish and wildlife habitat and MCBS native plant communities of high diversity.	Restorations and enhancements above and beyond easement requirements: M) Forest invasives removal and planting, shoreline restoration; P) oak savanna reconstruction; burn, pr seeding, oak planting. CB) Forest enhancement.	27		M) 21.8 ENRTF ac Completed P) 0.5 ENRTF ac Completed CB) 4.4 ENRTF ac Completed
4b	Martin's Meadows Open Space (Andover)	-93.373497	45.2826	Rum River Shoreline, including Forest and Ash Swamp.	Adjacent to Cedar Creek Conservation Area; across river from Rum River Central Regional Park.	Seeded prairie; buckthorn control; slope stabilized through habitat replanting and seeding.	11		Completed

4c	Cedar Creek Conservation Area (Anoka Co Parks - Oak Grove and Andover)	-93.372902	45.298698	550 ac oak woodland, wetland, forest, and ag fields at confluence of Rum and Cedar Rivers. In cluster of protected land of ecological significance.	Adjacent to Maratin's Meadows; across river from Rum River Central Regional Park.	Mixed height Prairie Reconstruction for wildlife habitat; 4000 small savanna trees planted by volunteers/landowner. Supplemental plugging.	43		Completed
5	Minn Land Trust Rum River Easement	L) -93.253998	L) 45.535	Riparian, Forest, Prairie, Savanna, Woodland, Wetland	High quality forest on shore of Rum River	Restorations and enhancements above and beyond easement requirements: Woody invasive removal.	7		Completed
6	Standing Cedars Conservancy St. Croix WSR Easement	-92.766197	45.285999	St Croix River Corridor	St. Croix contains a high density of rare species and MCBS native plant communities of high diversity. 1)Restoration of portion of large block of protected land.	Oak grove planting per pre-settlement vegetation.	0.5		Completed
7	Pond Dakota Mission Prairie Establishment	-93.287	44.808	Prairie, Oak Savanna, Woodland	Part of Minnesota River Valley; connected to NWR land.	Establishment mowing, invasive species control, removal of woody material.	2		Completed
8	Ike's Creek	-93.236	44.848	Wooded Ravine; spring-fed stream supporting trout	MCBS forest of moderate diversity, and buffer zones. Rare metro stream with trout	Upland restoration through invasive species removal and planting of native vegetation with emphasis on erosion reduction.	10		Completed
9	Monitoring of 26 existing MeCC projects; Maintenance, Enhancement, Upgrades on Select Sites as Needed.	various	various	prairie, prairie reconstruction, forest enhancement	MCBS quality dry hill prairie with rare species; prairie in corridor with Lost Valley SNA; high diversity forest	Invasives control; Prairie establishment; prairie burn; fencing of seedlings.	18		Site visits completed on 26 sites and maintenance on 6 sites.
10	Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park Shoreland Restoration	-93.544	44.576	Lakeshore	Improved fish and wildlife habitat; water quality	Wetland area seeded, ~9000 plugs in shoreline, w/ vols. Channel reconfiguration into wetland.	1	0.11	Completed
11	Heritage Village Park Wetland and Shoreland Restoration	-93.027	44.799	Lakeshore	Improved fish and wildlife habitat; water quality. Miss River flyway.	Supplemental vol planting, inv control; Site prep and regrading completed; Volunteers seed, installed erosion fabric, planted ~4,000 plugs and 35 shrubs.	1	0.15	Completed

12	Spring Lake Regional Park (Scott) Ph III	-93.471298	44.710098	Savanna Reconstruction, Oak Forest Enhancement	Regional Park with MCBS quality forest in Phase I and II	Buckthorn clearing, planting of 800 forbs/grasses with volunteers in savanna restoration project Site prep and tree planting with volunteers completed. Forest understory enhancement, and oak planting.	21		Completed
13	Freeman Park (Shorewood)	-93.605103	44.894699	Terrace hardwood forest with v large trees including American elm.	Hydrologically connected to Lk Minnetonka in area with med high concentration of NHIS Element Occurrence Records	Buckthorn cutting and removal.	7		Completed
14	Valley Park (Mendota Heights)	-93.129601	44.8951	Oak Woodland	Tributary to Miss River at Lilydale Regional Park.	Oak Woodland enhancement, including invasive removal and understory seeding and plugging of native graminoid species, in central oak knob portion of park.	2		Completed
15	Katherine Abbott Park Phase I sub-unit (Mahtomedi)	45° 2' 36.9528"	-92° 57' 50.0328"	Oak Forest	Site with mosaic of habitats	Oak forest enhancement incl. buckthorn control, plugging/seeding of native graminoid understory species.	6		Completed
NOTES:									

Metro Conservation Corridors VI Restoring Our Lands and Waters















































Community & People

Restoration effort preserves 20 acres of floodplain forest along Rum River

Published October 31, 2012 at 12:42 pm

More than 75 volunteers gathered on Saturday morning, Oct. 27, to restore 20 acres of floodplain forest along the Rum River just north of Cambridge.



Linda and Bruce Mickelson kneel next to one of the trees planted during a restoration project held Saturday, Oct. 27, on their land located along the Rum River just north of Cambridge off of Polk Street NE. The trees are marked so mowing can be done in between the rows. Photos by Rachel Kytonen

Leading the effort was Great River Greening, a non-profit environmental organization dedicated to fostering clean water, healthy habitat and improved quality of life through local, community-based restoration in Minnesota.

The volunteers planted trees and scattered seed on private land protected through a Minnesota Wild and Scenic Rivers easement to restore the last major gap in the otherwise intact floodplain forest along the Rum River.



Students from the University of St. Thomas School of Law volunteered with the restoration project. Pictured are Adrienne Geile, Laura Gisler, Nicole Limper and Roger Maldonado.

Floodplain restoration is part of a three-year plan that includes riverbank stabilization, invasive species control and wild rice seeding.

The property is owned by Bruce and Linda Mickelson, Diane (Bruce's sister) and Larry Lundeen and Judy (Bruce's sister) and Glen Thorson.

Bruce explained the land has been in the family since moving from Milaca to Cambridge in 1952.

"Great River Greening sent us a letter looking for land located in a DNR easement," Bruce said. "We were also looking to do some restoration projects so it seemed like a good fit. We met with Great River Greening and everything took off from there."

Volunteers planted 500 floodplain forest trees, including silver maple, American cranberry, pussy willow, meadowsweet, silky dogwood and cottonwood, and will seed the area with native grasses and wildflowers.



Volunteers learn about the restoration project.

Great River Greening Volunteer Manager Josh Kritz thanked all the volunteers for their time.

“We had around 75 volunteers whose time totalled around 200 service hours,” Kritz said. “These volunteers saved us a week’s worth of time for our crew. With these volunteers, we eclipsed 30,000 volunteers.”

[READ 6th Annual Cambridge Community Wide Read](#)

Why the Rum River

The Rum River, a state-designated Wild and Scenic River, runs 89 miles from its source at Mille Lacs Lake before entering the Mississippi River at Anoka. The meandering river passes through extensive backwaters and marshes, sand plains, floodplain forests and stands of red and white pine that are remnants of the vast pine forests that were logged during the late 1800s. Although it is a river with relatively clear waters, land use activities and invasive plant species are dramatically altering the landscape and pose a significant risk to the “outstanding and remarkable values” for which the river was originally designated.

Great River Greening

Great River Greening, in collaboration with partners, began the Rum River Program in 2010 with a three-year plan to restore, enhance and provide long-term protection for the Rum River and important habitats within its watershed.



Work has been performed on private and public lands throughout the watershed, involving riverbank and riparian forest restoration, installation of erosion control measures, upland habitat restoration, and the reintroduction of wild rice into the river's backwaters.

Great River Greening is a nonprofit environmental organization that is leading the charge for clean water, healthy habitat and improved quality of life through local, community-based restoration in Minnesota. Founded in 1995 in Saint Paul, the organization is growing statewide, and has engaged 30,000 volunteers, multiple landowners, public and private agencies in restoration partnerships.

Minnesota's Wild and Scenic Rivers Program

Minnesota's Wild and Scenic Rivers Program was established in 1973 to assist communities and property owners in developing management plans that protect the scenic, recreational, natural, historical and cultural integrity of the land. Six rivers in Minnesota have segments designated as wild, scenic or recreational under the state program, including the Rum.

Area landowners in collaboration with the Minnesota DNR have protected 117 parcels totaling 1,180 acres with permanent scenic easements on the Rum River, as well as other Wild and Scenic Rivers in the state.

Funding Sources

The restoration project was made possible with support from Bruce and Linda Mickelson, MN DNR Wild and Scenic Rivers Program, MN DNR Shorelands Program, National Fish and

Wildlife Foundation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Connexus Energy, Viking Gas, the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund and Minnesota Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment.

Filed Under: [must read](#)

ISANTI COUNTY NEWS

[Advertising Information](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Subscribe](#)

Copyright ©2015 [ECM Publishers, Inc.](#) • All Rights Reserved



Parks and Trails Happenings

A newsletter to inspire, inform and recognize Minnesota State Parks and Trails employees.

Director's Corner

Director's Corner	1
Safety Message	2
What's New	2
Green Moment	4
Happenings	4
Recent Media Coverage	7
From Our Customers	7
Personnel News	8

Director
Courtland Nelson

Deputy Director
Luke Skinner

Central Office Section Managers

Administrative Services
Linda Notch

Strategic
Stan Linnell

Operations
Peter Hark

Recreation Systems
Vacant

Communication and Outreach
Pat Arndt

Regional Managers

Region 1
Mike Kovacovich

Region 2
Paul Maurer

Region 3
Joel Stedman

Region 4
Craig Mitchell

PATH Editor
Paul Nordell

PATH is distributed as an internal newsletter sent via e-mail to all staff. Send your news items and comments to: path.newsletter@state.mn.us.

The deadline for submissions is the last day of the previous month.

As I have traveled the state this summer and fall I have viewed hundreds of signs for state legislative races. Many previous political district boundaries have been redrawn. Colleagues from the same party may have been forced to run against each other. As I was talking to one legislator on the phone this past fall, he asked me to call him back after the election since he was presently in a restaurant speaking to his constituents.

It will take some weeks to know who the leaders will be for the Minnesota House and Senate. We do know we will have many new players at all levels of government. The Parks and Trails story is a complicated one to tell and we will need help from friends groups, user associations and occasionally even our own staff. We are therefore at work putting together information which we all can use (fact sheets, maps, basic budget information) that will assist us in working with legislators, commissioners and others. Our new audience will need to understand the work, services and benefits of Parks and Trails.

The Department is working on individual Senate and House district maps that will display DNR services and key holdings within each district, as well as summary statements about our mission and goals (Conservation That Works, regional efforts, etc.). This information will be available on-line for downloading prior to any meeting with legislators or other interested parties. They will all be good tools for delivering our message and explaining the value of Parks and Trails and all we do for the community.

Regardless of your political view of the world, our future with budgets and programs is tied with the legislative process. As we go into biennial budget and legislative discussions, we will work as hard as we can on your behalf, while you continue to provide the best of care to our appreciative visitors.

Courtland Nelson

For update regarding Rum River easement project, see Section called "Green Moment"



Green Moment

Rum River flood plain restoration partners provide restoration help

On Saturday, October 27, a DNR Wild and Scenic River easement on the Rum River near Cambridge received a boost. It was the largest such riverbank restoration project to date, restoring 20 acres along ¼ mile of shoreline and floodplain forest. “We planted over 500 trees and shrubs, spread seed, cut willows for planting in the spring, and prepared the site for winter activities where the stream bank will be reshaped,” said Jay Krienitz (DNR Scenic Easements Coordinator). DNR combined forces with Great River Greening, local, state, and national partners, and 75 volunteers who worked together for half a day on this key stretch of the Rum Wild and Scenic River. The work also involved 20 partners from the Anoka Sand Plain Partnership. Private landowners with state-held conservation easements are eligible to receive cost-share funding for restoration activities that will improve woodland, forest, and savanna habitat for bird species and otherwise reduce land use impacts on the Rum River.

The day was sunny, crisp and beautiful. Bruce Mickelson, the landowner, was there with his family and talked with all the volunteers while he worked alongside us. His stories of living on the land and his stewardship of the river were moving as he spoke to the crowd of nearly 100 people. This project was reported in the *Isanti County News* on October 31.



On November 17th, this same partnership hosted a landowner outreach workshop in Isanti, MN. During this event, folks toured existing restoration project sites on MN DNR scenic easements and gather for a BBQ meal afterwards to learn about opportunities to engage in river stewardship through this partnership effort. For more on this story, see *Isanti County News*, 10-31-2012.

<http://isanticountynews.com/2012/10/31/restoration-effort-preserves-20-acres-of-floodplain-forest-along-rum-river/>

Happenings

Minnesota 4 Wheel Drive Association (M4WDA) partners with DNR to clean Belle Plaine State Wayside



On Saturday, Oct. 27, DNR Adopt-a-River facilitated an effort with M4WDA, working along with the City of Belle Plaine, Union Pacific Railroad, Metropolitan Mosquito Control District (MMCD) and Scott County Community Corrections. The cleanup was part of an ongoing effort to remove scrap and old tires from the 60-acre site, known officially as Belle Plaine State Wayside. In conjunction with state and local planning efforts, the site is slated to become a functional unit of the Minnesota Valley State Recreation Area.

The cleanup continues a multi-year effort that has stalled because of high waters and a washed-out railroad crossing on Cherry Street. Members of MN4WDA donated their time, expertise and use of their own heavy equipment, including a tow truck, dump truck, various front-end loaders and custom-built 4x4 trucks with flotation tires and trailers. Almost all vehicles had electric winches that seemed to effortlessly pull heavy objects out of the flood plain muck and tangles of roots.

The cleanup effort involved ten dumpsters that were filled with auto and truck parts, fuel-oil tanks, appliances and other assorted debris. In addition, hundreds of auto, truck and heavy-equipment tires were retrieved and piled on the side for later removal from the site. The project also had the participation of Belle Plaine City Council, Ag Power Enterprises and Fahey Sales (both of Belle Plaine), and Ziegler Caterpillar of Columbus, Minn. Scrap removal was provided by DNR and many of the tires will be hauled away and recycled by MMCD.

For more on this story, see: <http://belleplaineherald.com/main.asp?SectionID=7&SubSectionID=39&ArticleID=950&TM=38995.33> and http://files-intranet.dnr.state.mn.us/user_files/1889/volume418.pdf.



Find out at
1forall.us
Take a stand for the
First Amendment.

Editor [Mendota Heights Patch](#) mendotaheights@patch.com



Like 351

[Patch Newsletter](#)

[Nearby](#)

[Join](#)

[Sign In](#)

MendotaHeightsPatch 29°

[Home](#)

[News](#)

[Events](#)

[Directory](#)

[Pics & Clips](#)

[Holidays](#)

[Real Estate](#)



Update: The next chapter of your community's story begins with a single voice. Yours. [Blog on Patch.](#) »

[Government](#), [Awareness](#)

Restoration Continues at Pilot Knob Historic Site

Power lines will be buried and invasive species will be pulled in the coming weeks.

By [Anna Schier](#) | [Email the author](#) | April 23, 2012

Recommend 15

Tweet 5

[Email](#)

[Print](#)

[Comment](#)



Related Topics: [Great River Greening](#), [Partners in Preservation](#), and [Pilot Knob Preservation Association](#)

What do you think of Pilot Knob and the work that has been done at the site? [Tell us in the comments.](#)

[Pilot Knob](#) Historic Site in Mendota Heights will receive a proper spring cleaning this year.

The power lines that currently divide the sacred Dakota burial ground and site of the signing of the Treaty of 1851 will soon be buried under the roadbed. The city of Mendota Heights is coordinating the move with area utility providers.

"The lines will no longer fragment the prairie," said Amy Jenkins, director of communications for [Great River Greening](#). Great River Greening is currently in year four of a 10-year restoration plan for the site. The nonprofit's efforts are funded by Mendota Heights and the [Minnesota Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund](#).

Mendota Heights purchased Pilot Knob approximately six years ago with the support of a number of organizations, and the property has been undergoing restoration ever since.

"Pilot Knob gives us a rare window on the past," said Gail Lewellan, co-chair of the [Pilot Knob Preservation Association](#)

City officials plan to start the line burial project within the next six weeks. However, the project is a low priority for local utility providers that will need to do the work, according to Jake Sedlacek, assistant to the city administrator.

Minnesota Department of Transportation requires the lines to maintain Highway 55.

Funding for this project is provided solely by a \$75,000 grant received last fall from the [Partners in Preservation](#) program.

Pilot Knob will also undergo the next step in ecological restoration. Great River Greening is coordinating a native seed spreading and invasive species removal, which is scheduled for May 5.

A group of approximately 75 volunteers will be pulling invasive burdock and spreading native wild rye seeds.

It is important to maintain the ecological integrity of the site because the diversity of native plants in the area provides a habitat for grassland wildlife, said Jenkins.

"The site is very significant, both culturally and ecologically," said Jenkins.

[Email me updates about this story.](#)

[Keep me posted](#)

Chamber Community Outreach Committee Pulls Buckthorn at Ike's Creek

[Gina Szafraniec](#) | April 27, 2012 | [0 Comments](#)



Tory Christensen, Great River Greening, leads volunteers in the removal of buckthorn and garlic mustard along Ike's Creek

The Bloomington Chamber of Commerce and its Community Outreach Committee organized a buckthorn and garlic mustard removal event under the guidance of Great River Greening, a St. Paul nonprofit organization focused on ecological restoration, on Thursday afternoon, April 25, 2012.

The removal of invasive species benefited Ike's Creek, just steps from Mall of America and adjacent to the [Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge](#). It is one of only 12 trout streams in the metro area. The buckthorn and garlic mustard threaten the fishery and water quality because it keeps ground cover plants from growing and causes runoff water pollution and erosion.

"We provide an educational component to the ecological restoration," said Tory Christensen of [Great River Greening](#). At the beginning of the event Christensen explained what buckthorn and garlic mustard is, where it came from, how it grows and how it destroys native habitats and pollutes water. "A lot of people just don't have a clue...so when they leave they know what it is and they remove it on their own when they see it."



John Berhow-Rivera (left), Paradise Car Wash, "This is our first (Community Outreach event) to go to. We thought we'd try it out and see how we can help." Randy Bjornstad (middle), Nick McCollum (right)"

Smaller buckthorn was removed by pulling the roots out. Larger buckthorn was lopped off and a special herbicide was applied to the freshly cut area. The herbicide used is restricted and a permit is required to own it. Great River Greening representatives applied the herbicide.

Nearly 25 volunteers from the [Bloomington Chamber of Commerce](#), which included a team of fifteen volunteers from Mall of America, took time away from work to help.

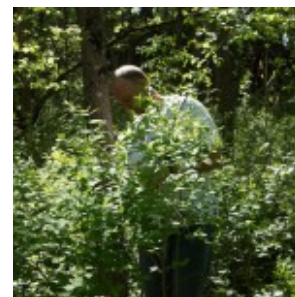
"It's nice to be outside and I had no idea this was here," said Erin Sheppard. "I've been working at the Mall for twelve years. This is really nice."

Great River Greening supplied the tools and gloves for the volunteers. It's funding comes from lottery and state funds. Private ecological restoration events can be organized with Great River Greening support through a business or organization, like the Chamber of Commerce. Communitywide events led by Great River Greening are also open to the public and usually have 200 people attend. Another event for Bloomington is planned for the fall.

Click on picture to enlarge.



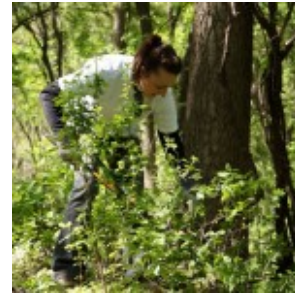
Troy Christensen, Great River Greening, leads volunteers in the removal of buckthorn and garlic mustard along Ike's Creek



Ken Vorsty, Mall of America, "When I started working at the Mall I was a gardener. I like things that have to do with the environment."



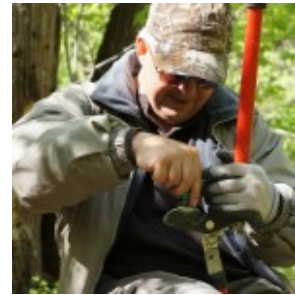
Volunteers for Bloomington Chamber of Commerce
Community Outreach



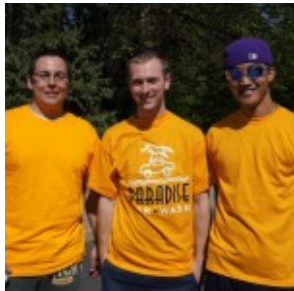
Kelly Steinhaus, Mall of America, lops buckthorn



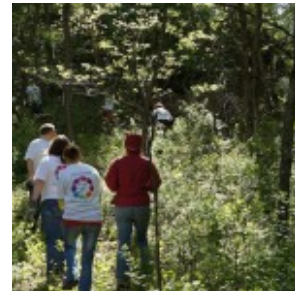
Ike's Creek



Mark Adkins, Merrill Lynch and Chair Elect for
Bloomington Chamber of Commerce



John Berhow-Rivera (left), Paradise Car Wash, "This is
our first [Community Outreach event] to go to. We
thought we'd try it out and see how we can help." Randy
Bjornstad (middle), Nick McCollum (right)



Tags: [Bloomington Chamber of Commerce](#)

Category: [Businesses](#), [Health](#), [Top Story](#)



http://www.twincities.com/localnews/ci_20542347/volunteers-help-remove-invasive-species-and-plant-prairie#

TwinCities.com
PIONEER PRESS

Volunteers to help remove invasive species and plant prairie seed at Pilot Knob site in Mendota Heights

[By Nick Ferraro](#)

nferraro@pioneerpress.com

Posted: 05/03/2012 12:01:00 AM CDT

Updated: 05/03/2012 05:44:06 PM CDT

About 75 volunteers are expected to remove invasive species and plant prairie seed at the historic Pilot Knob site Saturday, May 5, as part of a restoration plan now in its fifth year.

Great River Greening, a nonprofit consulting firm, continues to manage the restoration efforts on the 25-acre site in Mendota Heights under a city contract. The plan is to restore the site to native prairie and oak savanna by 2017.

The hill, located on the east end of the Mendota Bridge, south of Highway 55, is considered a sacred American Indian burial ground and has historic significance as the place where Dakota Indians ceded millions of acres to European-American settlers in the 1851 Treaty of Mendota. It's referred to as "Oheyawahi," which means "the hill much visited."

The majority of Saturday's work will take place on about three acres at the north end of the site. Volunteers are expected to be joined by U.S. Rep. Betty McCollum and Dakota County Commissioner Tom Egan.

MendotaHeightsPatch

Pilot Knob Clean-Up Draws Volunteers, Public Officials

About 75 volunteers braved a cloudy Saturday to participate in the historic site's restoration.



By Danielle Cabot
May 8, 2012

Pilot Knob Historic Site in Mendota Heights continues its transformation from an overgrown lot destined for condo development into a distinctive overlook of restored prairie and oak savannah.

Great River Greening and a crew of 75 volunteers donned gloves and shovels last Saturday to remove invasive species and spread seeds at the 25-acre overlook.

The site is known for both its historical significance as well as its sacred connection to the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux.

The city of Mendota Heights contracts with Great River Greening for the maintenance and restoration of the site, through a ten-year plan.

Also present were elected officials Ultan Duggan from the Mendota Heights City Council, Tom Egan from the Dakota County Board of Commissioners and Betty McCollum, from the Fourth Congressional District.

“We chose the path less traveled to restore a higher number of diverse species,” said Great River Greening Project Manager Wiley Buck, in a statement for the event. “The methods we used are different than others used in typical prairie reconstructions, which are often dominated by one or two species only. The outcome that is visible already will be a rich native prairie with a high biodiversity of native plant species.”

The site already attracts a wide variety of wildlife, including prairie songbirds that would not otherwise be found in an urban area.



Photo Credit:
Renée Duncan



Bringing new life to a Bloomington Creek

By [Sun Current Editor](#) on June 27, 2012 at 2:43 pm

By Nick Van Heest – Sun Intern

Amid the roar of jets overhead, 70 volunteers from the Royal Bank of Canada Wealth Management's branch in Minneapolis and nine volunteers from St. Paul-based Great River Greening teamed up on a recent Friday afternoon to remove invasive plant species from a Bloomington trout stream's banks, the latest installment in a \$45,000 restoration project that includes contributions from the wildlife refuge, the DNR, the Outdoor Heritage Fund and the Twin Cities chapter of Trout Unlimited.

"Once a year we come together for a Bluewater day, part of a ten-year \$50 million commitment by our firm to fund water projects around the globe," RBC Financial Advisor Craig Shaver said. "Polluted water is useless, so this is our attempt to make the world a better place in our own backyard."

Located just 800 feet from Bloomingdale's at the Mall of America, the creek officially has no name, but is often called Ike's Creek after the Izaak Walton League conservation group that raised fish in nearby ponds in the early 1900s, according to Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge wildlife biologist Vicki Sherry.

Ranging in width from a trickle to 15 feet, the stream bubbles out of the ground near Old Shakopee Road and travels eight-tenths of a mile to the Minnesota River. One of only 12 viable trout streams remaining in the metro area, Ike's Creek is pure and cold enough to offer the opportunity of restoring the native brook trout that used to glide through its waters, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Stream Habitat Specialist Brian Nerbonne said.

"I have a friend who grew up here in Bloomington, and this was one of his favorite places to hang out," Shaver said. "Hopefully, we can bring Ike's Creek back to the state it was in when my friend was little."

The restoration project began in 2007, when the DNR introduced 1,450 brook trout to Ike's Creek, of which about 150 have survived and reproduced. Fishing is not allowed—

even catch and release—because the population is still too vulnerable, according to Great River Greening Director of Conservation Programs Wayne Ostlie.

There was still one problem, however, that stood in the way of a sustainable trout population: a dam.

The Izaak Walton League installed a dam in 1926 to divert the stream in order to circulate the clean water through several nearby ponds. Historical documents show the creek supported trout until the 1940s when they disappeared for unknown reasons, according to Nerbonne.

But the dam was impeding the trout's movement, as they needed to move up and down the stream to thrive.

“To make the whole stream accessible to trout, the barrier needed to be removed,” Ostlie said. “The dam was effectively doing nothing in terms of what it was initially designed for, so it was an easy target for removal.”

About a month ago, DNR crews removed the dam and reconstructed the stream to the way it once flowed, with a natural gradient and a meandering curve. After restoring the stream, the next step was to uproot invasive honeysuckle, buckthorn and garlic mustard weeds that were outcompeting the native woodland species, according to Ostlie.

“We’re trying to get a healthy forest system in place which will help curb the erosion and lead to a more healthy trout population as well,” Ostlie said.

Restoring Ike's Creek is an ongoing effort, and it could be five to 10 years before significant changes in the canopy are visible, according to Ostlie.

The lower half of the creek is part of the wildlife refuge and is open to the public, while the upper half is owned by the city of Bloomington and several private landowners.